



## GrowthDNA: Margaret Reynolds' insights for strategic leaders



*Do you know who your "A" players are?*

## Workplace Warriors.

**What kind of performance are you fostering in the workplace? Are you developing the kind of quality you desire, or know is possible?**

**The time to plan for 2025 is now.**

While it may seem early to think about planning for next year, trying to improve performance never stops. As we take stock of the tools we have at our disposal, the one that I think will make the most difference for the most companies is often overlooked—*people*. We say people matter but we don't run our businesses that way. This isn't about salaries or vacation time or the right to work remotely. This is about do we have top notch players who can generate top notch performance and do they actively contribute to the best of their ability? The answer from my clients is, probably not. There are four key things that every company can do better in 2025 and should think about now.

- 1. How many of your employees are "A" quality employees?** For most leaders I speak with it is less than 30%. In fact, employee performance distribution often looks like a bell curve. When markets were tight it made sense to fill positions but are we now looking at an average employee group producing average work? Your goal is two-fold. Identify A players and determine if they are producing at an A level. If not, why? Identify *potential* A players and put support in place to help them get there. Not every job must be filled with an A player, but essential jobs must. How many non-A players can you afford to have? It may not require more people to accomplish great things—just better performing people.

2. **Is your Leadership Team a high-performance team?** Our recent blog was about how important it is to have a high-performance leadership team—they are a performance multiplier. If they are not, they are likely holding the company back and keeping top employees from thriving. [See this recent blog for more information.](#)
3. **Does your onboarding program become an organizational integrator, embedding new employees into the culture, establishing early expectations for performance, and acclimating them to the people and valued skills?** It is not about handing out computers and passwords. It is a process that can take up to a year. The result is to ensure early and deep exposure to the organization's culture, people and key processes and helping them with early wins. Set them up to be high performers from the beginning.
4. **Performance development can take many forms.** Online training, classroom training, and external training are common and helpful. However, if you have underperforming A players or high potential players who just aren't turning in desired results, one of the most current ways to help is with mentoring. Experiential training with someone who is an advocate can help them feel an investment in their future and better define success. Generally, it is not recommended that it is their boss, as that is a different relationship, although it should also be a positive one that helps with development. Mentoring is personal, it is specific, and it should be viewed as a career booster. Does your company have a mentoring program for high potential individuals?

If you aren't asking these questions for 2025, likely any plan you put together will be suboptimized. Happy to help you get started.

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### More resources

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